

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 03846 131548Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 TRSE-00
/039 W

-----130220 131606Z /40

P 131525Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2964

UNCLAS THE HAGUE 3846

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EAIR NL CASC
SUBJECT: PAN AM LOW FARE FLIGHTS AMSTERDAM-BOSTON

REF: (A) STATE 175904, (B) AMSTERDAM 701

1. CHARGE CALLED UPON MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION STATE SECRETARY MRS SMIT KROES THIS AFTERNOON TO DISCUSS PAN AM SITUATION. MRS SMIT EXPLAINED AT OUTSET THAT SHE HAD INSISTED PAN AM DISCONTINUE SYSTEM OF REGISTERING STANDBY PASSENGERS BY SPECIFIC DATE BECAUSE SHE BELIEVED THIS CONSTITUTED A FORM OF RESERVATION. MORE-OVER, SHE CONSIDERED THIS ARRANGEMENT WAS DISCRIMINATORY SO FAR AS PASSENGERS WHO BOOKED REGULARLY SCHEDULED FLIGHTS WERE CONCERNED. SHE ADDED THAT PASSENGERS WHO TOOK ADVANTAGE OF BARGAIN FARE SHOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT IT DID NOT INCLUDE ANY ASSURANCE EITHER OF TIME OF DEPARTURE FROM BOSTON OR FROM AMSTERDAM.

2. CHARGE DESCRIBED PRESENT SITUATION IN WHICH ONE OF WAITING PASSENGERS IN EFFECT VOLUNTEERED TO PREPARE LIST WHICH THEN BECAME BASIS FOR PAN AM TO USE IN HANDING OUT BOARDING PASSES. SUCH A SYSTEM DEPENDED ON AVAILABILITY OF PASSENGERS WILLING TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK AND GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONG WAITING
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PASSENGERS. HOWEVER, IT WAS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT NO PASSENGER WOULD VOLUNTEER FOR THIS TASK OR THAT THERE MIGHT BE COMPETING GROUPS. PAN AMERICAN MANAGEMENT UNDERSTOOD HER POSITION TO BE THAT AIRLINE ITSELF SHOULD NOT PREPARE LIST.

3. MRS SMIT RESPONDED THAT SO FAR AS SHE WAS CONCERNED

PAN AMERICAN COULD PREPARE AND MANAGE LIST SO LONG AS IT WAS PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT EACH LIST WAS FOR ONE DAY ONLY AND THAT ONCE IT HAD BEEN USED TO FILL AIRCRAFT IT WOULD BE DESTROYED AND NEW LIST BEGUN FOR NEXT FLIGHT. HER CONCERN WAS THAT NO LIST HAVE VALIDITY BEYOND 24 HOURS.

4. CHARGE SUBSEQUENTLY DESCRIBED CONVERSATION AND ITS OUTCOME TO PAN AM REGIONAL MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR WESTERN EUROPE, ERASTUS CORNING. HE SAID THAT PAN AM WOULD HAVE REAL DIFFICULTIES IF IT PROCEEDED ON BASIS PERMITTED BY MRS SMIT AND THAT HE BELIEVED PREFERABLE COURSE WAS TO CONTINUE PRACTICE WHEREBY ONE OF PASSENGERS PRODUCED LIST. IN A SOMEWHAT HUMOROUS VEIN HE SAID THAT IF NO PASSENGER EMERGED TO ASSUME THIS TASK ONE OF PAN AM EMPLOYEES MIGHT PUT ON BLUE JEANS, MINGLE WITH CROWD AND TAKE OVER THE JOB. CHARGE CONCLUDED CONVERATION BY INFORMING CORNING THAT MRS SMIT HAD EXPRESSED HER READINESS TO DISCUSS ANY ASPECT OF OPERATION WITH PAN AM OFFICIALS AND THAT HER DOOR WAS OPEN BOTH TO PAN AM AND TO EMBASSY IN EVENT OF ANY PROBLEMS. CORNING EXPRESSED APPRECIATION BUT HE SAW NO NEED FOR ANY FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH MINISTRY AT THIS TIME.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIR FARES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978THEHA03846
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780287-0487
Format: TEL
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780762/aaaabzzi.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5a219e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 175904, 78 AMSTERDAM 701
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2013724
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PAN AM LOW FARE FLIGHTS AMSTERDAM-BOSTON
TAGS: EAIR, CASC, NL, PAN AM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5a219e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014